

The President's Daily Brief

31 October 1972

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

31 October 1972

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The North Vietnamese are making an unprecedented effort to move military supplies into South Vietnam. Yesterday, they received support from China for their contention that a peace settlement should be signed today. (Page 1)

The South Vietnamese are suspicious of the north's intentions concerning the role of an interim body to maintain a cease-fire and supervise new elections. (Page 2)

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The Soviets [redacted] 25X1
(Page 3)

Egypt [redacted] 25X1
USSR. (Page 4)

After losing his majority yesterday, Prime Minister Trudeau is undecided whether he will try to form a government. (Page 5)

President Bhutto is again preparing public opinion for recognition of Bangladesh. (Page 6)

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VIETNAM

The North Vietnamese are making an unprecedented effort to move supplies into South Vietnam. According to an intercept of 29 October from the major North Vietnamese logistics authority near Vinh, in the first 25 days of October the authority sent south more than 5,400 vehicles, presumably carrying supplies as well as personnel. During the same period, it received some 4,300 vehicles from the north. The same message reported the transit of 92 tanks and 111 tracked vehicles. Other intercepts indicate that some of the tracked vehicles were pulling artillery pieces.

The 92 tanks could represent a North Vietnamese tank regiment deploying to South Vietnam. The heavy traffic has taken place despite muddy roads, indicating the importance of the resupply effort.

Within South Vietnam, the Communists are maintaining a fairly consistent pattern of small-scale attacks throughout the country, concentrating on major roads and waterways, as well as outposts and hamlets. We have noted some confusion among the enemy with respect to the imminence of a cease-fire.

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On 30 October the Chinese issued a government statement backing Hanoi's contention that an agreement between the US and North Vietnam is now ready for signature and blamed Washington for delays in signing.

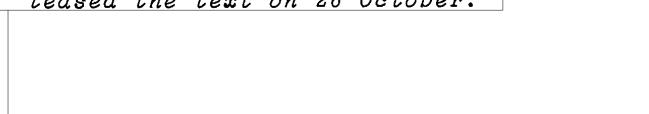
This is Peking's strongest and most authoritative statement on the negotiations to date. It has publicly moved Peking closer to Hanoi on this issue than the Chinese have been for months. The Chinese position carefully distinguishes itself from the Soviet line on the subject. Soviet statements imply that Moscow--which has not put its propaganda machine into high gear--believes further negotiations between Washington and Hanoi may be necessary to wrap up the agreement, whereas the Chinese have aligned themselves with Hanoi in implying that further bargaining is unnecessary.

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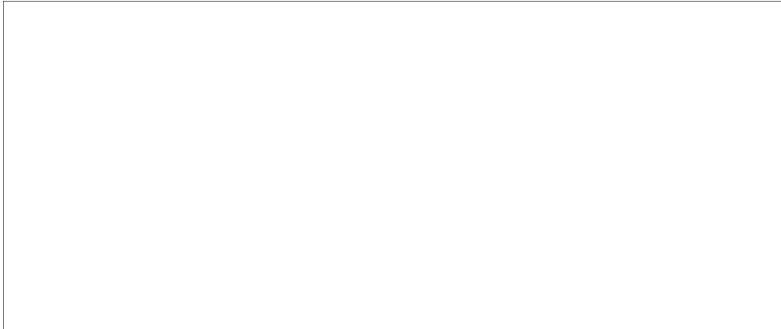
SOUTH VIETNAM

South Vietnamese Foreign Minister Tran Van Lam said yesterday that his government is ready to sign a peace settlement if North Vietnam withdraws its troops and the interested parties can agree on the exact role of an interim body to maintain a cease-fire and supervise new elections. Lam said that Hanoi's Vietnamese-language draft describing the proposed National Council of Reconciliation and Concord clearly refers to a government structure, while the English-language version describes the council as an administrative structure, implying limited powers.

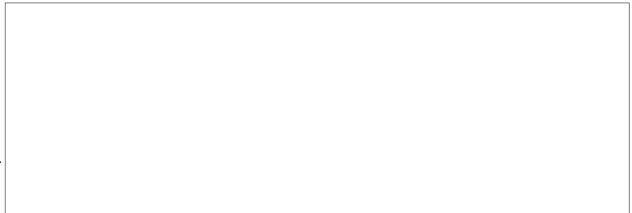
These issues have been troubling the South Vietnamese since the North released the text on 26 October.



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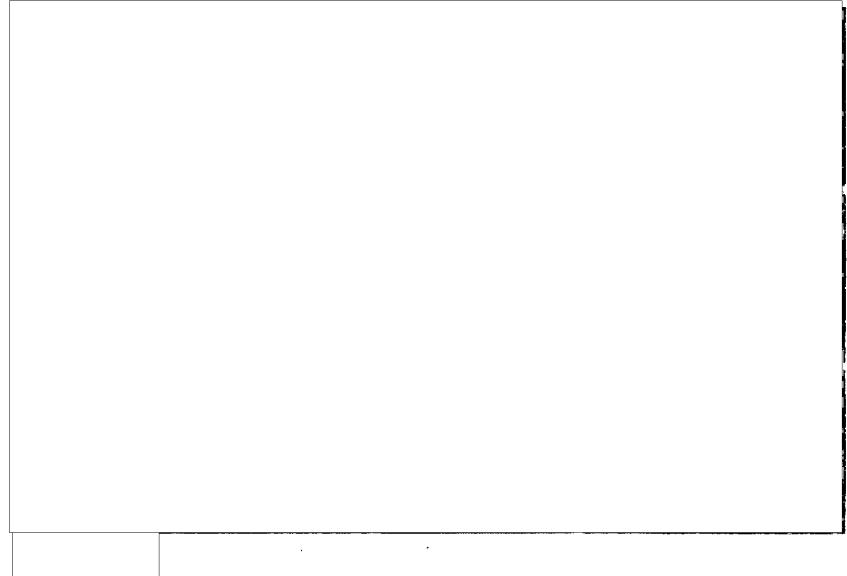
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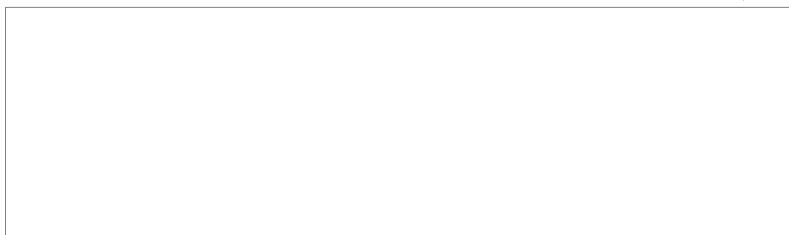
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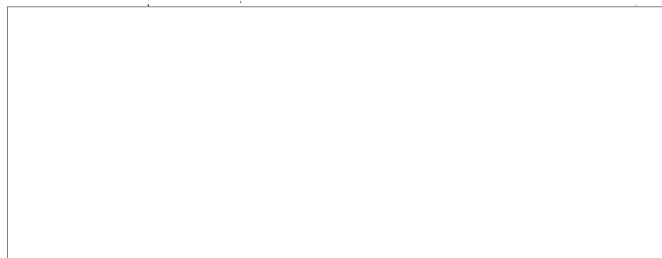
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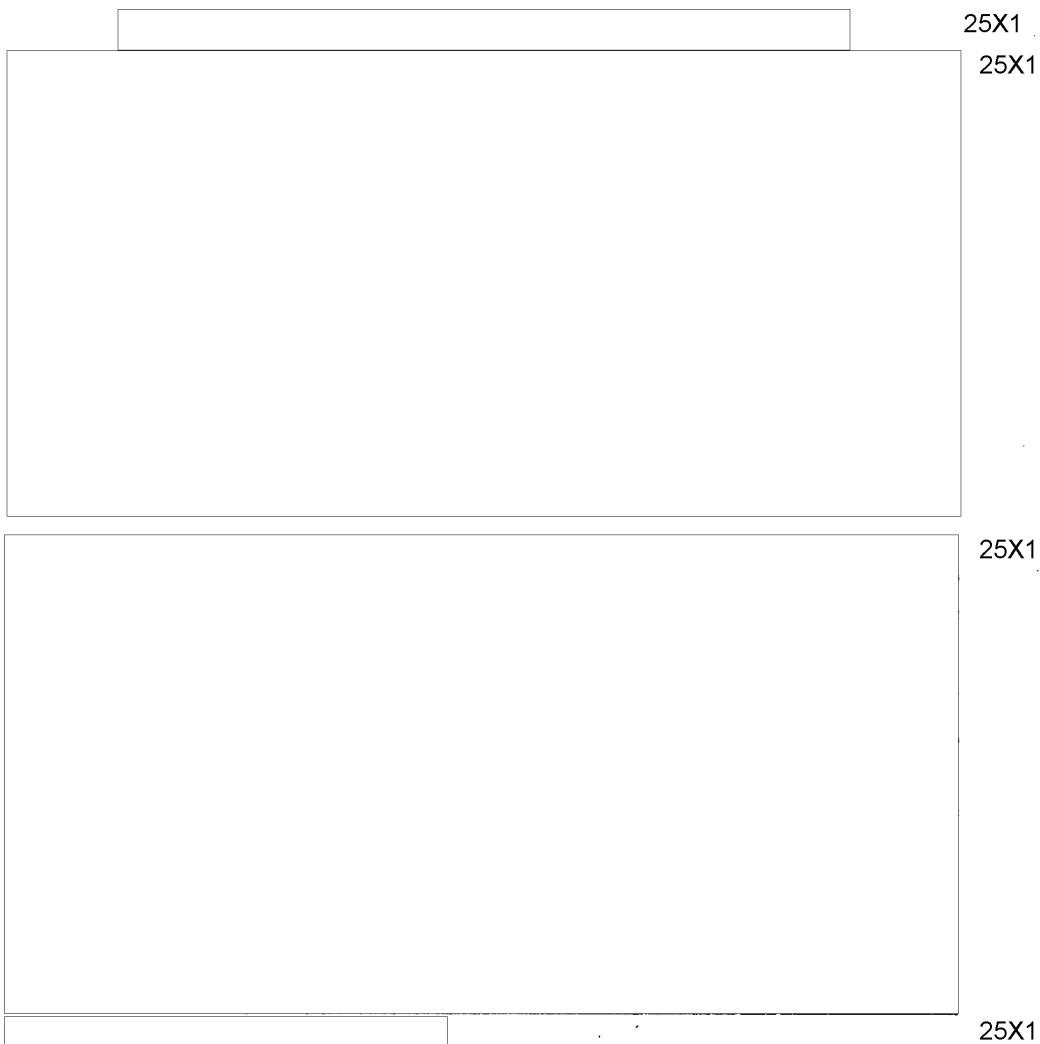


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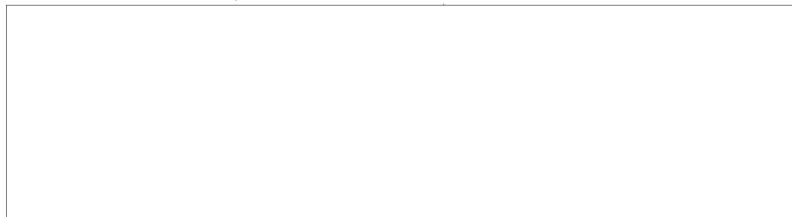
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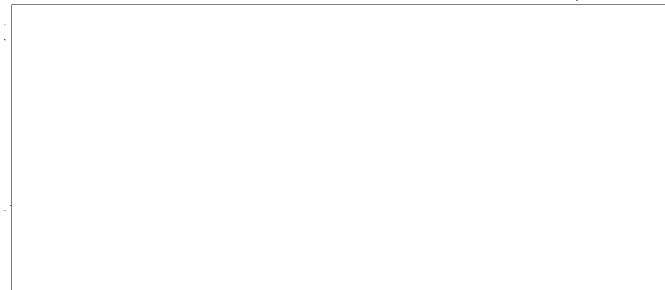
EGYPT-USSR



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CANADA

With nearly complete returns from all election districts, Prime Minister Trudeau's Liberals won or were leading in 108, the Progressive Conservatives in 107, the New Democrats in 31, and the Social Credit Party in 16.

When Parliament was dissolved in late August, the Liberals held 147 seats, the Conservatives 73, the New Democrats 25, and the Social Credit Party 13. The Liberals held on to their power base in Quebec, but lost heavily to the Conservatives in Ontario and to a lesser extent in British Columbia, both provinces where they had expected to do much better.

Trudeau is undecided whether he will try to form a government.

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PAKISTAN-BANGLADESH

Last week President Bhutto said in a speech that Pakistan would benefit in several ways from recognition of Bangladesh. He said he would tour Pakistan next month to put the issue to the people. Reaction from opposition parties in the Punjab was swift, and the US consul in Lahore believes that Bhutto faces a fight on this issue.

Bhutto's statement on recognition was more forthcoming than anything he has said in months. He seems to have spoken up in response to recent indications that Bangladesh is willing at least to talk over the issues with Pakistan.

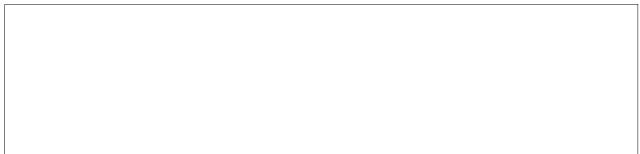
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NOTES

Israel-Syria: Syria responded to Israeli air raids on fedayeen camps near Damascus with an artillery barrage on the Golan Heights yesterday morning. The Israelis retaliated with an air raid on a Syrian Army outpost. Yesterday's action against the Syrian military installation is a measure of Tel Aviv's post-Munich determination to punish the guerrillas and their hosts.

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West Germany - East Germany: [redacted]

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Bolivia: Widespread popular opposition has developed rapidly to Bolivia's devaluation of its currency by 40.6 percent. After bread prices went up by 50 percent, workers, who remember the runaway inflations that followed devaluations during the 1950s, have clashed with police and may do so again. Their protests, however, are not likely to get out of hand. Political leaders in President Banzer's coalition government are torn between retaining a share of power and fear of alienating their supporters, but so far they have publicly supported the devaluation program.

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Morocco: King Hassan is planning to form a new government soon, including representatives of most political parties. After more than a month of negotiations, [redacted] has won over enough leading politicians to proceed. The King may have made some concessions to them, [redacted]

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[redacted] Ahmed Osman, to head the new government and make sure that the politicians do not seek too much political or economic power as the price for their cooperation. None of the parties involved has a broad popular following, but the announcement of their participation could help restore some public confidence in Hassan's rule.

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